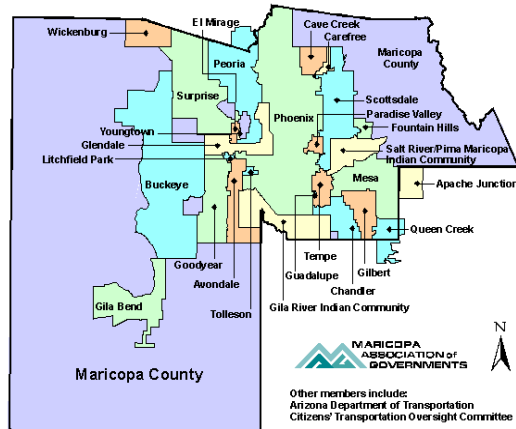


The MAG Regional Videoconferencing System.

The MAG Regional Videoconferencing System (RVS) is a videoconferencing network of television/computer units located at Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) member agencies across the region, including all 25 incorporated cities and towns, the Gila River Indian Community, the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Maricopa County, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) and at the MAG offices in Phoenix, Arizona.



The Maricopa Association of Governments.

MAG is a regional agency that develops policies and makes decisions in a variety of areas, including transportation, environment and human services. The Regional Council, which is the governing and chief policy-making body for the organization, is made up of all of the mayors of all of the cities in the region, a representative of the Maricopa County Board of Supervisors, lead elected officials from the Indian Communities, and representatives of ADOT and Citizens Transportation Oversight Committee (CTOC). The MAG Regional Council encourages videoconferencing as a way to reduce travel, relieve traffic congestion and decrease air pollution. Videoconferencing saves time, widens agency participation, increases public involvement, and expands communications both inside and outside the region.

MAG RVS Users.

Employees and elected officials of all MAG member agencies use the RVS for agency business and to participate in the MAG process.



RVS Usage.

The System accommodates multiple smaller meetings at one time as well as large group meetings. The MAG RVS is most often used for:

- MAG meetings
- Court arraignments
- Job interviews
- Employee training
- Depositions and witness testimony
- Workshops and forums
- Consultant meetings



Guadalupe uses videoconferencing for in-custody arraignments.

RVS Usage Savings.

Use of the MAG RVS for Fiscal Year 2003 resulted in the following savings:

\$175,985

24,044 miles not traveled

3,823 hours saved by not driving

These savings include travel time for all meetings as well as airfare and hotel accommodations for out-of-state participants. The benefits of using the MAG RVS go well beyond the savings in time, money, and miles. Other benefits include reducing stress, increasing meeting attendance and participation, providing additional training opportunities, reducing traffic congestion and improving air quality.

RVS Capabilities and Staffing.

The MAG offices serve as the main hub site, housing the equipment and digital network that connects all of the components of the system together. The System transmits voice, video and data to enable full meeting participation and collaboration. In addition, audio conferencing capability is used by itself as well as in combination with videoconferencing to provide maximum flexibility of the RVS.

Each MAG member agency houses one RVS unit and provides a site coordinator and a backup person. The site coordinators are responsible for scheduling, setting up, troubleshooting, and documenting videoconference. They also train employees on how to operate the equipment and report any equipment problems to the equipment vendor or to the MAG RVS Office.



RVS Funding.

The MAG Regional Videoconferencing System is funded for the first three years as a national demonstration project through the United States Federal Highway Administration. Funding is included for the equipment, network, service and support, MAG staff assistance, training, and marketing.

More Information.

For more information, contact the MAG RVS Help Desk at (602) 452-5095 or rvshelp@mag.maricopa.gov.



CONNECTING COMMUNITIES: THE MAG REGIONAL VIDEOCONFERENCING SYSTEM



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